

8
T W O

SERMONS:

*The one against the traditions of the
church of ROME;*

*The other about the right manner of
contending for the christian faith:*

preached at

693. d. 7
8. f
BARBICAN in LONDON,

October 15. and 22. M.DCC.XXXII.

on occasion of collecting for the relief
of the persecuted Protestants

O F

SALTZBURG.

By JOSEPH BURROUGHS.

L O N D O N,

Printed for J. NOON at the *White-Hart* near
Mercers-Chapel in *Cheapside*. M.DCC.XXXII.

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Printed for J. Noon at the White-Hart near
St. Andrew's Church in Cheap. MDCCLXXII.

S E R M O N I.

At giving notice of the collection.

J U D E, ver. 3.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation ; it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

THESE words would yield a very proper occasion for vindicating the whole christian religion from the cavils of its adversaries ; shewing the suitableness of it in its various parts to the condition of mankind, and to the perfections of that divine being to whom it is ascribed ; and setting forth the external evidence of its proceeding from him. 'Tis with a different view that I now enter upon them : proposing to inquire, whether we are really in possession of *that faith which was once delivered to the saints*, or not ; whether that faith is conveyed to us in the writings of the New Testament which we have in our hands, or whether we are to depend upon unwritten traditions, sup-

posed to have been delivered by Christ or his apostles, in order to make up the complete faith of a christian.

This is one of the grand controversies between us and the church of Rome: and indeed that, upon the right decision whereof, the whole protestant doctrine must either stand or fall. For if there be any thing necessary to the faith of a christian, any essential part of *the faith once delivered to the saints*, which is not contained in the books of the New Testament, but left to tradition; and if the Romanists can prove, that their numerous traditions are of this character: then we, by rejecting them, reject a considerable part of the christian religion. Nay, let it be ever so true in itself, that the books of the New Testament contain all that is essential to the faith of a christian; yet if the Romanists can persuade us that it is not so, but that oral traditions were delivered by Jesus Christ or his apostles, to supply what was and would be wanting in the written word; and that they, as being the only true church of Christ, are possessed of these traditions: then we and all christians must live in a continual dependence on them, and receive for the mind of Christ, whatever they shall be pleased to call so; and we shall never know an end of their traditions. They may publish one thing in one age for an apostolical tradition; and another thing never thought of before, in the next age, and so on to the end of the world: and they, pretending to be the only true church, will claim to be believed and obeyed, let their traditions be ever so ridiculous in themselves, or ever so contrary to the written word.

I thought it proper, at the entering upon this subject, to give you this brief view of the importance of it: and shall hope for your diligent attention, while I take occasion from the words of my text to enquire,

I. How we may know what the apostle meant by *the faith once delivered to the saints*: and particularly, whether in order to give a complete account of that faith, we must have recourse to traditions distinct from and

and additional to what is contained in the Books of the New Testament.

II. After what manner we ought to contend for this faith,

I. How we may know what the apostle meant by *the faith once delivered to the saints*: and particularly, whether in order to give a complete account of that faith, we must have recourse to traditions different from and additional to what is contained in the books of the New Testament.

The apostle does not, so far as I can see, throughout the whole epistle, tell us the particulars of that faith for which he would have christians contend. He takes for granted, that the persons to whom he wrote, were acquainted with them. And his epistle is directed to christians in general, whether learned or unlearned, persons of mean understandings, as well as those of the highest abilities; to all those, who were *sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called*. He does indeed put them in mind concerning the whole of their faith, that it is *a most holy faith*, when, in verse 20. he exhorts them *to build up themselves on it*: and in the next verse, he gives the same view of this faith which is set before us in the other books of the New Testament, while he exhorts christians *to look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. And agreeably to this view of *a holy faith*, it is evident that his whole epistle is levelled against the unholy practices of some, who had in those early days crept into the church and defiled it; *ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into wantonness, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*; as he expresses himself, ver. 4.

But tho these expressions are general; yet it is evident they have a reference to some scheme of doctrine, made known to mankind by Jesus Christ, as the mind and will of God, giving them the view of eternal life thro' the path of holiness: and by the very general manner in which the apostle refers to this scheme, he plainly intimates, that there was no great difficulty for people

people of an ordinary understanding to know and retain in mind the substance of it. The question therefore now before us is ; whether there is reason to believe that the whole of that doctrine to which our text refers, was since committed to writing, and is contained in the books of the New Testament ; or whether some considerable and important parts are left out of all those writings, to be conveyed by tradition.

Now, the scheme of the gospel, as it stands in the New Testament, so fully answers all the ends that can be desired, for restoring lapsed mankind from their sinful and miserable condition ; contains so copious an account what is required of a christian ; and is attended with such encouraging and well-grounded assurances of happiness, to those who shall duely regard it ; that unless there be very clear evidence to prove, that other matters, essential to a christian's character, and necessary to his happiness, were designedly left to be conveyed by tradition rather than in writing, we may be satisfied the whole of *the faith once delivered to the saints*, is contained in the New Testament itself. But such evidence on the side of tradition there is none. And indeed it is no way consistent with that tender concern which the books of the New Testament shew Christ had for our peace and welfare, or with the wisdom which shines thro' the whole scheme of doctrine those books contain ; that he should leave any thing of moment to be conveyed by such an uncertain precarious way as oral tradition ; while we see that care is taken to commit to writing matters of such importance as are contained in the New Testament, and upon the whole so complete a rule for the faith and practice of a christian.

The Romanists acknowledge the same canonical books of the New Testament as the Protestants do : and it is evident from those books, that the gospel of Christ was calculated for all succeeding generations, as well as that one in which he himself lived ; and that it was his mind it should be conveyed down to future ages. Now tho we do not find any express commands
given

given by our Lord to his immediate followers for committing his gospel to writing; yet we have reason to believe he would take care that the authentic doctrine which they received from him, should in all its essential parts be conveyed to succeeding ages, in a certain, and not in a precarious manner. Accordingly we find, that two of the apostles, *Matthew* and *John*, employed themselves in writing an account of the life and doctrine and death and resurrection of Christ their master; not contenting themselves merely with preaching in his name. The same was done by *Mark* and *Luke*, who were not apostles. And *Luke* himself, in the beginning of his gospel, assures us that the like was attempted by others. But I shall quote the passage chiefly for the sake of observing the view which the Evangelist himself had in writing. *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order, a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us; even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word: it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.*

Here we see that the view which the Evangelist had had in writing, was, *that the certainty of those things wherein christians had been instructed, might thereby be made known; that christians might know the certainty of those things which were most surely believed in the primitive age.*

It was manifestly with the same view that *John*, who was one of the apostles, wrote his gospel. For thus he himself declares towards the latter end of it; ch. xx. 30, 31. *Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the son of God, and that believings ye might have life thro his name. But tho he wrote with the same view as Luke and the other Evangelists, to convey the certain knowledge of those things which were then most firmly believed; yet it is plain*

plain from the testimony either of *John* himself, or of some christians who had been contemporaries with him, that he did not go about to write down all the things which Jesus did. For thus it is added in the last verse of *John's* gospel: *there are also many other things which Jesus did; the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.*

This shews, that even the Evangelists themselves, who were guided by the Spirit of God to write their history, for conveying the certain knowledge of Christ's doctrine itself, and of the facts to which it appeals for its divine original, saw no necessity of writing down every thing that he said or did. So that if we had only the four gospels extant, they would be sufficient for our guidance into all necessary christian truth; and consequently there would not be the least occasion for unwritten traditions. Through the liberal care of divine providence we have the same things for substance delivered by four Evangelists; and some particulars preserved by each one, which the rest had omitted: moreover, some of the doctrines of christianity, which could not well be understood during Christ's life, are largely explained by his apostles, in their epistles written after his death: and for this liberality of divine providence we ought to be highly thankful. But the great care taken in this respect will never prove that all these books were absolutely necessary, so as that the gospel could not have stood or made its way without them: and for the same reason 'tis very plain, the gospel stood in no need of unwritten traditions to make any addition to its real perfection.

If it be asked, whether the gospel could have made its way in the world without being at all committed to writing? I answer; that whatever means the wonderful wisdom and power of God could have provided, it does not in the ordinary course of things appear probable, that the gospel would have been regarded for any considerable time, if it had not been preserved in writing.

ing. God might indeed have furnished all those in every age who were to be employed in preaching it, with extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Spirit, such as should infallibly secure them from all mistakes, and should give abundant satisfaction to their hearers that they were thus infallibly guided. But we have no reason to believe, that the most high saw it fitting to do this with regard to the latter ages of christianity, after the abundant provision of this kind made in the first age, and the committing the substance of the christian doctrine, together with the evidences of its divine authority, to writing, whereby it was capable of being always appealed to. It was indeed fitting, that the first publishers of the gospel should be guided by an infallible spirit. And this was bestowed upon them, as it had been promised to them. Christ assured his disciples, sorrowful at the view of his departure, that *the Comforter, the holy Ghost, whom the father would send in his name, should teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said to them*, John xiv. 26. And ch. xvi. 13. he added, that *when the Spirit of truth was come, he should guide them into all truth*.

It was, I say, of great importance, that the first preachers of the gospel, even tho they had received their doctrine from the mouth of Christ himself, should be thus infallibly assisted and guided. And I cannot forbear adding; that it was likewise of great importance, that some of these persons thus infallibly guided, should commit to writing the substance of the christian doctrine, and the historical account of the facts to which it appeals as testimonies of its divine original. For notwithstanding the wonderful efficacy of preaching the gospel in the primitive age, by persons thus assisted, and attended with miraculous powers: if God in the wisdom of his providence did not think fit to continue these miraculous powers in all generations, as it does not appear he did, and if in this state of the case there had been no written rule provided, there

must have been the utmost danger of losing the true doctrine of christianity.

For the truth of this assertion, I appeal to common experience, even with regard to any one single narrative or relation of a fact. How various are the accounts given of the same fact by different persons, even where there is a written record of it, to which all may have recourse? how much more different, where there is no written record? how different in a month, or even in a week's time? how much more different and uncertain, after a few years are elapsed? And what little credit does any story gain, after many years from the time in which the fact is said to have happened, tho told with ever such minute and remarkable circumstances, if there has never been any attested record? The very want of such a record, makes thinking people ready to say, that those who lived at the time when such a fact is pretended to have come to pass, did not believe it themselves, or did not think it of the least importance; otherwise they would have taken care to preserve the memory of it in writing.

But what may be said concerning any single relation of fact, is with much more advantage applicable to the case of the whole christian doctrine; in which there are many parts, and each of considerable importance towards the reception of the whole, in ages after the primitive times. The preceptive doctrine itself is large and copious: and 'tis the more useful to us for being so copious. And there is so much of moment in the history of Christ, for satisfying us that he came with authority from God to deliver these precepts, to enforce them with those motives which make up another part of his doctrine, and to assure men that upon their receiving or rejecting him, their final happiness or misery depends; so much of moment in writing down the period of time wherein he appeared, and in naming places and persons, known to agree with the history of those times; so much of moment in the circumstances of his birth and manner of life, the miracles he performed,

formed, the prophecies to which he appealed, the predictions himself delivered, the death he suffered, his rising from that death, and sending down the miraculous gifts of the holy Ghost upon his followers; that his doctrine itself, notwithstanding all his declarations of the importance of receiving it, would in the course of a few ages have had very little regard paid to it, if there had been no such circumstances to attend it. And now will any man pretend, that all these could in any tolerable measure, according to the ordinary course of things, have been preserved by tradition, so as to gain any degree of credit, 500 or 1000 years after the things were said to be transacted? He must have a judgment very different from that of mankind in general, who can believe it. And if the substance of Christ's doctrine, together with the historical facts which support it, would in all probability have been lost, without a written record to convey the true account of them; what reason can we have to believe, that such traditions were ever designed to be preserved, which were not by the apostles themselves committed to writing, as the main doctrine and the historical facts were? "Those many works which our Saviour did, (which St. John *supposes would not have been contained in a world of books*) if they had been written, or if God by some other means had preserved the knowledge of them, had been as worthy to be believed, and as necessary, as those that are written. But then, to shew you how much more a faithful keeper records are than report; those few that were written, are preserved and believed; those infinitely more that were not written, are all lost and vanished out of the memory of men." This is the observation of * Mr. Chillingworth: and 'tis of great weight in the controversy about traditions. What reason then have we to believe, that the traditions of the church of Rome were ever verbally delivered by the a-

* *Answer to Charity maintained*, Sec. ch. iii. § 46.

possibles, or indeed ever entred into their minds ; when it appears they are either very frivolous and unworthy of that doctrine which we know the apostles preached, or else contrary to it? Give me leave to set some few of them before you, taken from the council of Trent, which is the most authentick account of the Romish religion.

In their XIIIth session, ch. 8. they tell us, that “ in receiving the sacrament, it has always been the custom in the church of God that the people should receive the communion from the priests ; but that the priests should, while they are celebrating, communicate to themselves : which custom,” they tell us, “ as descending from apostolical tradition, has a right to be retained.” Now if by all this they mean only the minister’s taking the bread and wine with his own hands, whereas the people receive from him ; there is no mighty discovery in it, to any one who has read the New Testament. But if by the priest’s communicating himself, they mean those masses wherein the priest alone partakes of the elements, the people standing by and only looking on, they had need of some very strong arguments, and very different from the Scripture account, to prove that this is apostolical tradition.

They have as much need of strong proofs when they affirm *, that “ the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass is according to apostolical tradition regularly offered, not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the living faithful, but likewise for those who are dead in Christ, and not yet fully purged.” As much to the full will they be at a loss for proof, † that the ceremonies of mystical benedictions, lights, incense, garments, and many other things of the same kind, (which they bring into the sacrifice of the Mass) proceeded from apostolic discipline and tradition : that there is a ‡ purgatory ; and that

* Sess. xxii. cap. 22. † Sess. xxii. cap. 5. ‡ Sess. xxv. protem.

“ the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of
 “ the faithful, but especially by the acceptable sacrifice
 “ of the altar.” Indeed this doctrine of purgatory
 they do not expressly ascribe to apostolical tradition,
 but to *the antient tradition of fathers*; by which 'tis pretty
 evident they mean the same thing. For they do in the
 same breath, with equal truth and modesty, pretend
 likewise to countenance it from the sacred scriptures
 themselves; and thence it is very probable, that by
the tradition of the fathers, they mean that of the a-
 postles.

These are some of the traditions of the church of Rome.
 And concerning these and all the rest 'tis easy to see:
 that either they are pretended to be derived from Scrip-
 ture itself, and therefore ought never to be mentioned
 in contradistinction to it; or else are utterly unworthy
 of the apostles, and inconsistent with their acknow-
 ledged doctrine contained in their writings, and with
 the doctrine of Christ their lord and master: which
 inconsistency is a sufficient argument against receiving
 them.

But even in case they were consistent with the apostle's
 doctrine, and were proposed to be received by a chris-
 tian already in possession of the Scriptures: besides
 the needlessness of any such additions, he must be in
 the greatest perplexity for want of knowing upon what
 ground to receive them. For if traditions not recorded
 in Scripture are to be received; it must be either upon
 their being reported by word of mouth from one ge-
 neration to another, down to our own times; or else
 upon the credit of some antient writers in ages after
 the apostles. The former way I have already shewn to
 be such as can convey nothing like a certainty; and
 consequently is what no wise man in any affair of im-
 portance would ever depend upon. And even the lat-
 ter way, that of depending upon fathers and antient
 writers since the apostles times, is attended with such
 difficulties, that it can yield no solid satisfaction. Con-
 cerning many of the traditions thus conveyed, it is
 plain

plain that we have different accounts from different writers ; one father being inconsistent with another. And it is an insuperable prejudice against them all ; that none of them were thought worthy to be committed to writing by the apostles themselves, the inspired followers of our common master, who had his own promise of *being guided into all truth*, and of having the help of the Spirit, *to bring all things to their remembrance*. 'Tis I say an insuperable prejudice against all traditions not committed to writing by the apostles themselves, that they were by them wholly neglected, when we find to our comfort they were directed by the good Spirit of God to furnish us with so minute an account of Christ's doctrine and history, so sufficient a rule for our faith and practice. Upon the credit of antient writers we may believe, that the traditions they record were entertain'd by some christians, and yet not see the least reason to acknowledge them binding upon us. And there must be a vast difference in this case. It would be very absurd to put the fathers upon the same foot of authority as the apostles themselves ; since they had not that infallible guidance ever promis'd to them or received by them which the apostles had, nor ever pretended to it.

But to put the matter out of all doubt ; I will shew you the uncertainty of tradition even in very antient times, from a most remarkable instance of it. And that was the settling the time of celebrating Easter. According to * *Eusebius*, that controversy was as antient as *Polycarp's* time, who is said to have been a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*. He, and with him the churches of *Asia* in general, observed Easter as the Jews did their passover, on the fourteenth day of the moon. Himself in *Asia*, and *Anicetus*, who in his time was bishop of Rome, were indeed of pacific minds : and tho' in this point they differed, the Roman church, together with other western churches,

* Hist. eccl. lib. v. cap. 26. edit. R. Steph. 1544.

keeping Easter always on the first day of the week, and in a different manner from the churches in *Asia*; yet amicably * communicated with each other. But so did not their successors. For in the days of the emperor *Commodus*, a furious controversy arose between the eastern and western churches, both sides claiming apostolical tradition; founding their opinion upon the practice, as they supposed, the one of *St. John*, the other of *St. Peter*: the consequence of which was, that *Victor* †, bishop of Rome, excommunicated all the churches of *Asia*, and cut them off at one stroke. But this did not put an end to the controversy. For it appears by *Eusebius*, in his † life of *Constantine*, that it remained, till the council of Nice, in the fourth century, decided the matter in favour of the western churches.

In the mean time, what became of the apostolical tradition derived from *St. John*, and followed by the churches in *Asia*? It seemed to have at least as much probability on its side as the other: but the superior numbers prevailed. And *Socrates* the historian, following the authority of *Eusebius*, puts the decision in a great measure upon this foot. He † expressly says, that in the synod “ the emperor *Constantine* writing to those “ who dissented, advised them in regard they were “ but few, to follow the greater number.” Then he quotes from *† *Eusebius* the emperor’s words, to the same purpose. After which he adds: “ that the quarte-
 “ todecimans affirm the keeping the 14th day of the
 “ moon was delivered to them by the apostle *John*;
 “ that the *Romans* and those in the western parts, say the
 “ usage in force with them was delivered by the apos-
 “ tles *Peter* and *Paul*; but that neither of the two parties
 “ could produce any written proof relating to these
 “ things: that he himself conjectured—the feast of
 “ Easter was in all places observed from some usage

* Ibid. cap. 25.

† Lib. iii. cap. 14.

‡ Lib. v. c. 22.

*† Vit. Constant. lib. iii. c. 19.

“ and custom, because no sect of religion observes the
 “ same ceremonies as others,——even those of the
 “ same faith differing from each other with respect to
 “ rites.” In the beginning of the same chapter he
 blames those who contended about this festival: affirm-
 ing “ that neither the apostles nor the gospels had
 “ laid the yoke of servitude upon christians; but that
 “ men themselves, each in their respective countries,
 “ as they thought fit, observed the feast of Easter and
 “ the other festivals, because therein they were relaxed
 “ from their labours, and so they kept up the memory
 “ of Christ’s salutary passion; for neither our Saviour
 “ himself, nor his apostles have by any law enjoined
 “ us to observe it;——that the view of the apostles
 “ was, not to make laws about festival days, but to
 “ bring in a regular course of life, and of piety to-
 “ wards God; and that to him it appeared, that as
 “ many other things in several places came into fashion,
 “ so this feast of Easter had its peculiar observation
 “ among all persons by custom, the apostles having
 “ never prescribed any law to any person about it.”

If such thoughts had possessed the minds of christians
 in general, relating to this affair, they had avoided
 those uncharitable contentions into which they fell.
 But the plausible topic of apostolical tradition gave a
 mighty zeal to the disputants on each side; and its
 great uncertainty, even in early days, betray’d them
 into much confusion, and laid the foundation of a
 world of mischief: and indeed under such an uncer-
 tain direction there was no knowing where to fix their
 foot.

All this confusion our blessed Lord undoubtedly fore-
 saw, and made a due provision against it. But many
 of his professed followers chose rather to be guided
 by their own corrupt affections, than go on in that
 plain way which he had marked out for them. He
 foresaw that some would sophisticate his pure doctrine
 by inventions of their own, and endeavour to impose
 laws upon their brethren, which himself had never en-
 joined.

joined. He provided therefore a rule, a sure and sufficient rule, of faith and practice, in the writings of his immediate followers; who have recorded what they perfectly knew to be his mind and will, together with the circumstances which proved it to be the mind and will of God who sent him. And to give his disciples in succeeding ages the more sure defence against uncertainties and perplexing doubts; he took care to let the substance of what himself delivered, be recorded and conveyed to posterity by several different hands, of persons thoroughly acquainted with the things they wrote of; and to incline the hearts of some, who had been either fully instructed by himself while here upon earth, or replenished with the extraordinary gifts of his Spirit from heaven, largely to explain those things which cou'd better be understood after his ascension than before: and upon the whole, he took care to have committed to writing, in a variety of lights, a complete, copious, consistent, and satisfactory account of the last dispensation of God's will towards men.

All this provision is made for us in the books of the New Testament; tho' the several parts of that collection were written at different times and upon different occasions; as likewise the discourses of our blessed Lord himself were at different seasons occasionally delivered. And as we plainly see by the gospel history, that our Lord himself chose to deliver his own divine discourses at different seasons, as different occasions called for them, rather than at any one time to deliver the whole of his religion in the set form of a regular system; and as herein he shewed his great wisdom and goodness, in taking care to have his variety of instructions attended with circumstances which should strongly impress them: so the same wise goodness appears in directing his immediate followers to commit to writing upon different occasions what he would have to be the rule of his disciples in all succeeding ages. To whatever different occasions these several writings are

owing; yet as they all proceeded from persons well known to be thoroughly furnished for teaching us the mind of Christ our lawgiver, they give us a satisfactory ground for owning them as our rule: and as all of them together furnish out a rule so very copious, as is that of the whole canon of the New Testament; it is indeed amazing, that any men who call themselves christians should ever have recourse to such an uncertain thing as tradition, for completing what is abundantly perfect without it, and what is in danger of being intirely lost and made of no effect when blended with it.

It is indeed objected to us by the Romanists, that we receive the knowledge of the whole gospel, and the credibility of it, from tradition. All which we readily acknowledge; and are thankful for that universal tradition upon the credit whereof we receive it. But in this objection they greatly sophisticate. For the tradition whereby the gospel is conveyed to us, and whereby we are satisfied of its credibility, is vastly different from that upon which their unscriptural doctrines and practices are grounded. The tradition upon which we receive the books of the New Testament, is not that of a particular person or church, concerning a thing said to have been believed or practised a great while before any written account was given of it: but is the concurring acknowledgment of a great number of persons, in different parts of the world, both friends and enemies to christianity, in several succeeding ages, that those books were written by the persons to whom they are ascribed; and more especially a strong concurring evidence from many hands in the early ages of the church, that these books were constantly read in the assemblies of christians as the rule of their religion, and that the doctrine contained in them was known and opposed by its enemies as the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Besides all this, the intrinsic goodness of the moral doctrine of the New Testament speaks for itself. And as to those things which are peculiar to christianity; they are so far from being inconsistent with that reason and

judg-

judgment, which teach us to yield a submission to whatever upon good evidence appears to have the stamp of divine authority; that they approve themselves to a serious mind, as being well suited to the condition of those to whom the gospel is offered: whereas the traditions of the Romish Church, it is easily seen, are many of them inconsistent with and contrary to the written word, which themselves pretend to receive, and even to common sense; so far destitute are they of any sufficient evidence that they were ever taught by Christ or his apostles.

To what has been said against receiving unwritten traditions, give me leave to add; that it is incumbent on those who contend for them, to prove clearly and plainly, that they did indeed proceed from Christ or his apostles, and that it was the mind of Christ they should be observed as necessary parts of the faith or practice of his followers. The perfection of that rule which is contained in the written word, satisfies us we have no need of them. The proof lies upon those who contend for them. And from what has been advanced it appears, that it will be very hard to bring proof; unless confident assertions and absurd pretences to infallibility may pass for proof.

Thus I think it has been sufficiently evinced; that the traditions upon which the church of Rome lays such a stress, make up no part of that faith for which the apostle in our text exhorts christians *earnestly to contend*; and that the whole of what is essential to the faith of a christian, being delivered in the primitive age by verbal instruction, was likewise in various parts, upon a variety of occasions, committed to writing, and is contained in the books of the New Testament. I shall now make a reflexion or two; and so conclude.

1. If unwritten traditions belong not to the faith of Christ; then they who set them upon an equal foot with the written word, weaken the faith of christians, and take the ready way to destroy it, by drawing off their minds from a due regard to that complete scheme

of doctrine which is a certain rule, into an endless maze of uncertainty, and a constant danger of pernicious errors. Now as black a charge as this is, it plainly belongs to the church of Rome: and they will never be able to clear themselves of it, so long as they acknowledge the authority of the council of Trent. For that council, in its 4th session, has the assurance roundly to declare, that "they **receive and venerate, with the*
" same pious affection and reverence, not only all the
" books of the Old and New Testament, but likewise
" traditions themselves, whether relating to faith or
" practice, as being either by word of mouth dictated
" by Christ, or by the holy Spirit, and preserved by
" a continued succession in the catholic church." and every one knows, that they claim to themselves alone the character of the catholick church. What now must be the consequence of these things? especially when in the same session they forbid people to put their own sense upon Scripture, or any sense different from the pretended unanimous consent of the church, and of the Fathers, which it is impossible to come at; and when it is well known they endeavour to keep the people from so much as reading the Scriptures, and to prevent the having it in their power to put any sense upon them at all. What can be the consequence; but that the people must intirely depend upon the priest, and receive from his mouth whatever he is pleased to call either Scripture or tradition? By these means the Scripture itself in effect is only parcelled out to the people by oral tradition. And even in those cases where any part of Scripture is produced, it must receive its authentic sense according to the pretended interpretation of the church, and so as to make it seem to agree with those very traditions which are indeed contrary to its intention. If this is not weakening the faith of christians, and undermining the foundation of it; I know not what can be so called. It is at this rate to very little

* *Pari pietatis affectu ac reverentiâ suscipit & veneratur*
 purpose

purpose that the word of Christ is conveyed to the present age in writing. It becomes of no effect, to those who trust in traditions as delivered to them by their priests. And that saying is very true concerning the Romish priests, wherewith our blessed Lord so justly reproached the Pharisees of old; that *lying aside the commandment of God, they held the tradition of men; and that they made the word of God of none effect by their tradition*; Mark vii. 8, 13. For let a man but be zealous for the traditions of the church; and he shall not fail of an absolution for all his sins, be they what they will. Nay, he shall not fail of an indulgence for all sins to be committed for 1000 years to come, if he desires it, and pays a good round sum for it; let the written word ever so strongly denounce condemnation to all those without exception who persist in their sins. What did or could the Pharisees do more, when they *made void the moral command of honouring father or mother*, by telling a man he was excused if he dedicated that as a gift, whereby he should relieve his poor parents in their distress? This is the particular case to which our Saviour in the forecited place refers. And if the Pharisees of old, as our Saviour affirms, *did many such other things*, so may the Romish priests at this day, by the like subterfuge. Indeed, there is no moral duty which may not be eluded, nor any vice which may not be palliated, and even indulged, if the people can be kept up in a servile regard to the traditions of the church, and in a belief that she alone has the right and the power of interpreting Scripture. For 'tis only the priest's telling a man that such is the tradition of the church: and then, let the thing be ever so contrary to Scripture and to the dictates of conscience; the Scripture is not known, and conscience will by degrees be laid asleep. And there is no end of what the church, by its priests, may palm upon the people for apostolical tradition. This is verified by the practice of the church of Rome: which has been abundantly more politic than to bring out at once all the traditions she pretends to father upon

upon the poor abused apostles, Mr. * *Chillingworth* makes very good use of this observation, in his fore-mentioned controversy with the papists. He is giving his reasons why we should not learn the religion of Christ from them. " Whose questioned doctrines
 " none of them came from the fountain of apostolic
 " tradition, but have insinuated themselves into the
 " streams by little and little: some in one age, and
 " some in another: some more antiently, some more
 " lately: and some yet are embrio's, yet hatching
 " and in the shell; as the pope's infallibility, the
 " blessed virgin's immaculate conception, the pope's
 " power over the temporalities of kings, the doctrine
 " of predetermination, &c. all which yet are, or in time
 " may be, imposed upon christians under the title of
 " original and apostolical tradition: and that with
 " that necessity, that they are told they were as good
 " believe nothing at all, as not believe those things
 " to have come from the apostles, which they know
 " to have been brought in but yesterday."

I shall conclude this present reflexion, with putting you in mind how dreadful an effect the placing traditions upon an equal foot with Scripture has actually produced in countries where popery prevails. I have shewn you the tendency: and the event answers to it. The holy Scriptures are hereby lost to the common people; lost, to all the excellent purposes they were design'd to answer. The people's whole religion is locked up in the breast of the priest: he thinks it more for his purpose to deal in traditions than in the written word: and hence comes that prodigious ignorance which reigns among the common people; and from which, while this continues to be their condition, there is no hope of restoring them. But this melancholy thought naturally leads me to a reflexion of a different kind.

* Chap. v. § 101.
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2. If all things essential to the faith of a christian, are contained in the written word; if it is able to make us wise unto salvation, and we are safer in adhering to its directions alone, than blending unwritten traditions with it: then we ought to prove our thankfulness for the free use of the Scripture, by increasing our acquaintance with it, and shewing in the course of our lives that we are resolved to be guided by it. Our seeing that the papists are under a miserable delusion, will stand us in no stead at the great day, if it shall appear that we who had the most favourable opportunities of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, neglected those opportunities, and remained ignorant and wicked. Instead of this, our condemnation will be the more heavy; while a wise and righteous and gracious governor will make all proper allowances for the unavoidable failings of those, from whom the means of knowledge were wickedly detained.

I could not think of a more proper subject whereon to employ your thoughts, than that on which I have now been discoursing, when I was directed to give you notice of a collection to be made this day seven-night, for the relief of many thousands of your distressed brethren, lately inhabitants of Saltzburg in Germany: who, by the furious bigotry of the archbishop their prince, have been driven out of house and home, destitute of all necessaries, and forced to wander abroad in the want of all things, merely because (having by the good providence of God gained some knowledge of his written word, and thereby become convinced of the gross errors of the church of Rome) they were desirous to increase in that knowledge, and conform to it in their practice. I have shewn you what good reason we have to believe, that the whole faith of a christian is contained in the books of the New Testament, without being at all beholden to traditions. I have shewn you the dreadful tendency and the real consequence of setting traditions upon an equal foot with Scripture.

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My next business will be to enquire, after what manner we ought to contend for such a kind of faith as the books of the New Testament recommend. And I believe you are beforehand possessed with the conviction, that among all the methods of vindicating the faith of a christian, violent measures can never have a place. I hope at that time to lay before you a particular account of the sufferings, which such numbers of your brethren have undergone, merely by their contending in a peaceable manner for the purity of the christian doctrine; not having time to enlarge upon it now. But if you have any zealous regard for that purity of doctrine yourselves, and are sincerely thankful, that you have the liberty of serving God in the use of that excellent rule of Scripture, with which his providence has blessed you; let me intreat you to come prepared with sentiments of compassion and benevolence towards those, who have joyfully *suffered the loss of all things, that so they might win Christ.* And if by what you have heard already, you are disposed to contribute liberally towards the relief of such vast numbers of distressed people; let not your charitable inclinations, especially if they are now formed into good resolutions, die within you. I shall only add: that the public prints, and likewise some other papers published on purpose, give such an unexceptionable account of the distress of these persecuted protestants, the cause of their persecution, the patience, and even the joy with which they bear it, and lastly, the security you have that your bounty will faithfully be conveyed to them; that all objections against a liberal contribution are effectually removed.

S E R M O N

SERMON II.

Preached at the collection.

JUDE, ver. 3.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation; it was needful for me to write unto and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

I HAVE already discoursed on these words: and inquired how we may come to know what the apostle meant by *the faith once delivered to the saints*: particularly, whether in order to give a complete account of that faith we must have recourse to traditions distinct from and additional to what is contain'd in the books of the New Testament. And I think it was made to appear, that such traditions make up no part of that *faith* for which the apostle in our text exhorts us to *contend*: but that the whole of what is essential to the faith of a christian, being delivered in the primitive age by verbal instruction, was likewise in various parts, and upon a variety of occasions, committed to writing, and is contained in the books of the New Testament.

It was observed; that the only description the apostle gives of this faith, is that it is *a most holy faith*; and that it is such an one thro' which we are *to look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. From these two hints it would be easy to enter into the par-

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particulars of the christian doctrine: which particulars the apostle in this short epistle chose not to mention; and thereby shewed he took for granted, the persons to whom he was writing very well knew what those things were, in which the christian doctrine consisted. The epistle is directed to all those, who were *sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called*; i. e. all sincere christians. All those who made profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and shewed that their faith had a sanctifying effect upon them, the apostle took for granted had a competent knowledge of the faith they professed: and hence it is easy to infer, that he believed a man of an ordinary understanding, and not at all acquainted with nice subtleties, might know enough to make him a good christian. All which is very consistent with the exhortations in other parts of Scripture, *to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. The one grand thing which the author of this epistle proposed to himself, was the prevailing upon christians to exemplify that holiness in their lives, to which the profession of faith in Christ naturally called them. It was with this view that he stiled their faith *a most holy faith*, at the same time that he exhorted them to *build up themselves on it*; ver. 20. With this view he warned them, v. 4. of those *ungodly men who had crept into the church, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*; i. e. disregarding the holy precepts delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ in the name of God the Father. And with the same view it is, that almost all the rest of the epistle is taken up, in putting christians in mind of the righteous judgments of God, executed upon ungodly and unholy men, in a great variety of instances, in former generations, and his vengeance against those angels who were disobedient to their creator and governor.

'Tis remarkable, that in so short an epistle warnings are given against such a number of vices. But hereby the apostle shews what was his grand view in writing it,

it. In ver. 5. he mentions *unbelief* and distrust in God, aggravated by the knowledge of former signal instances of his power, wisdom and goodness. In ver. 7, 8, 10. he mentions *defilements of the flesh, despising dominion, and speaking evil of dignities*. He hints at malice, covetousness and ambition, covered with specious pretences of piety; ver. 11. He shews the scandal and reproach of these vices, mixed as they were in the characters of some professed christians with shameless intemperance; v. 12, 13. and in ver. 15, 16. he takes notice not only of ungodly courses of action, but likewise of *speaking*; particularly *murmurings, complainings*, and the using of *great swelling words, to set forth with a view to mens own advantage a high admiration of others*.

Since such vices as these had crept into the church, the apostle thought it proper to take notice of them, while he was exhorting christians *to build up themselves on their most holy faith, and to contend earnestly for it*. And considering what is to be the subject of my present discourse, it would be very unfitting that I should pass over in silence, the one thing which the apostle takes such great care to inculcate; viz. that the faith for which christians ought to contend, is *a most holy faith*. My business at this time is to enquire

II. After what manner we ought to *contend for this faith*.

An *earnest contention* he himself tells us it must be; * striving, in a vigorous exertion of the powers of our minds. By which expression he seems to allude to those exercises among the Greeks and Romans, wherein men strove for the victory, and were to receive from their appointed judges, crowns or garlands, in token of their being conquerors. In these exercises, 'tis well known, men used to exert their whole strength of body and fervour of mind, besides the necessary preparation of temperance beforehand. And all this, as the apostle *Paul* observes, was done in *striving for a corruptible crown*; whereas christians strive for an *incorruptible*; 1 Cor. ix. 25.

ἡ ἀγώνισμα.

In general therefore we see, that an indolence of mind, a disposition altogether unconcerned for the prevailing of *that faith which was once delivered to the saints*, is inconsistent with an *earnest contention for it*. We can never be said *earnestly to contend for it*, if we do not some way or other shew a sincere concern, by using some vigorous endeavours, for its prevailing in the hearts and lives of men.

But how is this earnest contention to be shewn? and with what propriety can christians in general be exhorted thus to contend for the faith? I answer,

1st. There is no sincere christian but is capable of shewing this concern, this *earnest contention for the faith*, in conversation; when he finds that doctrine, which is the rule of his present conduct and the foundation of his hope, ridiculed or maliciously opposed. Even a christian of a mean capacity, who is in earnest in his profession, cannot only see good reason for adhering to it himself, but likewise give some good reason why he does so. If he cannot answer all the sophistical cavils of its enemies, or go on plausibly in a train of argumentation; yet he can signify that the substance of the doctrine is really good in itself, and has a direct tendency to make men good and happy; and that it has many testimonies of a divine original. It were indeed to be wished, that christians in general would take more pains than they do in *building up themselves on their holy faith*. Then would they always be prepared to defend it; *always ready to give an answer to every man that should ask them a reason of the hope that is in them*. But it is to be hoped there is no sincere christian who is not able to give some tolerable account, some good reason, why he professes himself a christian. And the doing this, upon such occasions wherein the christian faith is ridiculed or opposed, is one right and proper way of *contending earnestly for it*. It is not necessary in order to prove a zealous concern for the christian doctrine, that every man who professes it should enter into long debates about it, whenever he falls into the

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the company of scorers. A man who knows his own inability for a train of arguing, may in a few words shew, that the doctrine of christianity does not deserve to be ridiculed: and even such a defense as this, nay the very shewing a displeasure at the contempt offered to our holy religion, without directly offering any arguments in its defense, will effectually prove *an earnest contention for the faith*. A silent signification of dislike will answer the end in some measure, where there is no opportunity of shewing any other. But then it should be so ordered, that our silence may evidently appear to proceed from dislike, and not from approbation. For that man who can willingly suffer it to be suspected, that he approves the contempt cast upon christianity, is so far from *contending earnestly for the faith*, that he gives ground to believe he is an enemy to it in his heart.

2dly, There is no sincere christian, but can and will *contend earnestly for the faith* by suffering in its behalf, if the providence of God calls him to it. The maintaining a resolution to this purpose, is necessary to the very being of a christian, if we may believe our Saviour himself: who assures us, that *we cannot be his disciples, without renouncing all that is dear to us, bearing the cross, and following him*; Luke xiv. 27. We are *to resist even unto blood, striving against sin*, if the divine providence orders our circumstances in such a manner, that we cannot avoid it without renouncing our religion. This is *an earnest contention* indeed: and so is the suffering ourselves to be stripped of our substance or our liberty. Indeed so is bearing the contempt of scorers, and standing up for a despised scheme of religion; which was the case mentioned under the former head. But the bearing of these other sufferings is a proof of a much more earnest contention of mind. And yet this we cannot be excused from, if our case be so circumstanced that we must either thus suffer or deny the faith we have professed.

3dly, There is no sincere christian, but can and will *contend earnestly for the faith*, by keeping close to it in
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the course of his actions, as the rule of a holy life. By this means it is vindicated from the reproaches and slanders of its enemies. And considering the snares to which we are all exposed in an evil world, we may hereby very justly be said *to contend earnestly for the faith*, that holy faith which we profess: whereas a vicious or a careless course of life, is either a contending against it, or at least a betraying it into contempt. The man who lays a restraint upon irregular appetites, and *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts*, takes care to *live soberly and righteously and godlily in this present world*, contends to a very good purpose for that holy faith which was once delivered to the saints. And, I think, it has been sufficiently shewn, from the tenour of the whole epistle of which my text is a part, that the apostle directed the exhortation in the text with the view of persuading christians to vindicate their holy religion by their own regular course of life, from the contempt and damage it had suffered by the vile practices of some who had dishonoured it. The reputation of Christ's religion had suffered very much by means of those who had acted quite contrary to its design, while they professed to be guided by it. It was therefore with great propriety that christians in general were exhorted *to contend earnestly for it*, by shewing that they accounted it their honour to live agreeably to it. This was the ready way to make it flourish and prosper, to stop the mouths of scoffers, and to make its own influence spread far and wide. And this will always be the surest method for answering the same good end. They *who have so learned Christ and been taught by him, as to put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and to put on the new man, which God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, will by the course of their lives promote the design of their religion; and will always be able to make some tolerable defense of it, as *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak*. But those who understand ever so well the doctrine of christianity, if

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it be not entertained in their hearts and formed into their practice, will do more harm to it by refusing to make it the guide of their actions, than good, by pretending to vindicate it with their arguments. If in the course of our actions, we are either sensual and intemperate, or taken up with the greedy pursuit of riches or honour or power, to the neglect of reverence towards God, or righteousness and benevolence towards men; or if under a pretence of religion itself we fall into fierce contentions with each other, contrary to the design of religion in general: we may declare as loudly as we please that we *contend for the faith*; but we are indeed fighting against it, and, instead of promoting, do really hinder its progress.

Let us therefore be persuaded to employ our zeal in the right way; in behalf of those great things *in which we are sure the kingdom of God consists*; i. e. in *righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*: remembering the words of the apostle, Rom. xiv. 17, 18. *that he who in these things serveth Christ, (and in these things there is a real service paid to Christ) is acceptable to God and approved of men.* And, that we may not slacken our diligence, after some good endeavours of this kind; let us depend upon it, that here our earnestness is perpetually call'd for; and that we can never be excused from *contending* in this manner *for the faith once delivered to the saints*, as long as there are any evil examples abroad in the world, or corrupt affections of our own to struggle with.

I shall forbear any further general application of this subject, for the sake of that particular view with which I entred upon it: which was to stir you up to a cheerful contribution for the relief of your persecuted brethren, who desire to adhere to the faith of Christ without adulteration; and who have so *earnestly contended* for it, tho in a meek and peaceable manner, as to *suffer the loss of all things* for its sake.

To prepare the way for this purpose, I did in my former discourse endeavour to shew: that the cause for
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which they suffer, deserves all that earnestness of zeal which they have discovered in its behalf: that the books of the New Testament contain a sure and sufficient rule to walk by: and that the blending traditions with them, as the church of Rome does, under pretence of making up the complete faith of a christian, does indeed weaken that faith; lays it open to innumerable corruptions, and endangers its intire overthrow, by gradually drawing off mens regards from the written rule, till it is made of no effect, even where it is not quite suppressed, which yet is done in a great measure with regard to the common people of the church of Rome. Now this surely is a good reason why we, who profess a zeal for the gospel in its purity, should be ready to assist those who contend earnestly for it, and are oppressed by the imposers of corruptions. I proceed now with the same view to make the two following observations upon what you have this day been hearing.

1. Among all the methods of *contending for the faith*, that can be thought on, there is no room for using violence or compulsion.

Other ways of *contending for the faith* might have been named, besides those which I have enumerated. As particularly; taking pains to possess the minds of those over whom we may have an influence, with right sentiments about the faith, and a serious regard to the design of it, and embracing opportunities to convince the gainfayers and corrupters of the christian doctrine, that they are in the wrong. And there is no doubt, that where there is an earnest concern for *the faith once delivered to the saints*, it will be expressed in these ways, by different persons, according to their different stations and capacities. But if besides these we were to name all the other methods that can be thought of; still the observation would prove true, that among them all there is no room for using violence or compulsion. And the reason is, because this is inconsistent with that *holiness*, which is an essential character of *the faith once delivered to the saints*. By

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true faith in Christ the heart is *purified* and cleansed, from bitterness, as well as from other vile affections. The man therefore who entertains this faith in his heart, cannot consistently with it use any violent measures, even for propagating the faith it self which he embraces; besides that it is impossible in the nature of things that compulsion should produce faith. St. Peter puts christians in mind, that *by obeying the truth thro' the Spirit, they had purified their souls unto unfeigned love of the brethren*: and for that reason calls upon them to *love one another with pure hearts fervently*; 1 Pet. i. 22. And very numerous are the places, where we are directed to retain a brotherly affection even towards those whom we apprehend to be in great mistakes, and to endeavour to reclaim them from their errors by mild and gentle methods, but never by violence. We are never allowed to *contend for the faith* by destroying or any way persecuting even those who oppose it; much less those who earnestly desire to be guided by it.

The Papists therefore are openly condemned by that very faith for which they pretend to be so strenuous, and which they would confine to themselves. By their cruel persecutions of christians, they prove themselves the enemies of the christian faith. This is very evident from the whole tenour of the epistle from which my text is taken, if it be true which the apostle asserts and inculcates, that the faith of a christian is *a most holy faith*. For if this be true; then whatever way it is whereby we *contend for this faith*, it must be such as is consistent with holiness. But the bitter spirit of persecution is inconsistent with it. It is an impure and unholy principle; defiling the soul, and rendering it unfit for its proper offices towards God or man.

My other observation is this.

2. If it would become us to *contend earnestly for the faith* by suffering in its behalf, in case the providence of God called us to it; then certainly it becomes us to relieve and assist, to comfort and encourage those who

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actually suffer for it, and who by their patience and constancy set us a good example.

This observation is clear enough in itself. And therefore instead of offering to prove it, I shall take up the rest of my time in laying before you an account of the condition of your persecuted brethren, to whose necessities you are now desired to shew compassion.

You are desired to contribute to the relief of many thousands of Protestants, formerly inhabitants of *Saltzburg* in *Germany*; who are driven from their habitations, and from all their possessions, some of them from their dearest relatives, particularly from their children; and who cheerfully endure these sufferings because they will not embrace the corruptions of the church of Rome.

By the * accounts transmitted to us from some who have relieved great numbers of them, they appear to be people of great simplicity and innocency. And tho by the cruel diligence of their persecutors they have been prevented from gaining that knowledge of the Scriptures which they earnestly desire; yet the † weakest of them have had the opportunity of seeing that there are gross and intolerable corruptions in the church of Rome. They are all desirous of being well instructed in the Protestant doctrine: and with that view ‖ some of the most antient of them who had not learned to read, are beginning to learn in their old age. They gained what knowledge they have of the Protestant religion, by being many of them descended from ** Protestant parents; who secretly brought the Bible and other good books into the country, and read them to one another in a private manner for their mutual instruction and comfort. 'Tis affirmed by some, that the country of *Saltzburg* had in some measure the Protestant doctrine from the beginning of the Reformation. And 'tis evident that the famous †† treaty

* Account of the sufferings of the persecuted Protestants in the Archbishopric of *Saltzburg*, &c. pag. 22.

† Account, pag. 20.

‖ Ibid.

** P. 21.

†† P. 68.

of Westphalia makes provision for a toleration of Protestants upon the foot their brethren enjoyed it in the year 1624. Notwithstanding which they now suffer a severe and cruel persecution, merely for being Protestants. Which persecution appears to have been begun and carried on after the following manner.

At first * all pains were taken to dissuade them from the protestant religion, by arguments drawn from worldly interest. When that would not do; their books, which they had been many years collecting, were seized in several places. Then more violent measures were used. Many were apprehended; especially such as were suspected to be their leaders; and sent in fetters, dressed in derision with white caps hanging down to their breasts, into the deepest dungeons in Saltzburg: others were sent away, their relations not knowing whither. They were threatned with beheading, drowning, the gallies, and the like: to all which they only answered, *in God's name, in God's name*. At last, when they could not be brought to turn, † they were on a sudden ordered to leave the country: and these orders were executed with all imaginable rigor. Some were taken out of the field: others dragged out of their beds: all in general had a sudden summons to depart; and very few were permitted to sell their goods, or to take any thing necessary with them: many were obliged to leave their wives and children behind, and go away deprived of all they had in the world.

This and much more appears by the complaints laid before the Evangelic body at Ratisbon, and the Imperial mandates issued thereon. And what increased their calamity was, that they were forced to ** begin their journey in the depth of winter. The first 800 spent 5 whole weeks in their journey, in the most bitter, cold, and stormy weather; and were a fortnight wandring over mountains, not knowing whither they went: whereby

* P. 23. † Account, p. 24. ** Ibid.

many were almost starved, especially as they were in want of bread for three days together.

In the journey the * Papists in some places insulted them, and threw dirt at them; which they bore with great resignation. And, according to the accounts given by those who entertain them, they still † behave themselves contentedly, thankfully, meekly and patiently; and when they have occasion of mentioning their affliction, do it without the least bitterness or murmuring. Upon the whole, their behaviour has been so exemplary, that we are ** assured there appears a great disposition in many Papists to embrace the Protestant faith; and †† several Jews have been sensibly affected with their case, and at one place offered them lodgings.

The pretence for the severe treatment of these poor exiles, is quite contrary to the acknowledgment made by their persecutor himself, in his passports granted in order to their banishment. The passports granted to them, (and no person was suffered to leave their country without one) || expressly testify their quiet behaviour, and that they were obliged to leave the Archbishopric of Saltzburg only on account of religion. Agreeably to which the Archbishop himself †|| recommended it to the Bishop of Augsburg to grant them a passage thro' his territories. Yet he colours over his severe persecution of them by pretending they were seditious and rebellious. Under this specious pretence, of the rebellion of his Protestant subjects in the mountains, who desired no more than the liberty of exercising their religion, the *|| Archbishop in his decree against them acknowledges that he had forbidden them to continue

* Account pag. 35. The news papers assure us that they have been yet worse treated in several catholic places thro' which they travelled; that they have been unmercifully beaten and wounded, the clergy exciting those barbarities against them; but that they bore all these insults with prudence and resignation. *Daily Journ.* Oct. 18.

† P. 13. ** P. 10, 32. †† P. 35. || P. 37. †|| P. 38.
*|| P. 46.

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their assemblies and preachings, on pain of forfeiting their estates, and even their lives: and that the better to secure the public tranquillity, he had forbidden them to assemble, even in private, to the number of more than three. And all this appears to have been done while the passages were shut up, and the poor people would have been glad to retire and exercise their religion elsewhere.

The † reason assigned for this conduct is, that he should be inexcusable, if, being an ecclesiastical prince, he should tolerate in his Archbishopric the exercise of a religion contrary to that of the church of Rome. He declares, that in order to restore a settled tranquillity in his Archbishopric, there remains no other method to be taken, than to extirpate to the root these turbulent people. And he ordains; that all those who profess the Lutheran or Calvinist religion, shall depart his country, never to enter it more, upon pain of confiscation of their estates, or even of death, according to the exigency of the case. All persons of these professions, who work in the salt-mines or other public works, or are otherwise employ'd in the Archbishop's service, are at once discharged and obliged to depart: and as no person was admitted to the freedom of a town, till he had proved that he himself and all his family professed the Romish religion; any man professing himself a Protestant, is declared thereby to lose his freedom, and ordered into banishment. The suspected are to be examined whether they be Catholics or Protestants: the prohibited books, among which the Bible is the principal, taken from them: and if any one pretending to be a Catholic, but proving to be a Protestant, deals in those books, or even has them in his house, he is condemned to perpetual banishment and loss of estate, and if the case requires it, life itself.

The injuriousness of this treatment is clearly set forth by the Evangelic body at Ratisbon, in their repre-

sentations to the Emperor, as being contrary to the laws, and particularly to the treaty of Westphalia: which expressly provides for those who shou'd embrace a religion different from that of their sovereigns, a toleration and * intire liberty of conscience, for exercising their religion both in private and in public, and likewise for sending their children to foreign schools of their own religion, and for selling their effects when they have a mind to leave the country. Notwithstanding which provision, every one of these privileges were denied them. They were refused the exercise of their religion, and, for a considerable † time, the liberty of going away; were cast into prisons, deprived of their estates, and, which was more bitter, of their children too, who were forcibly taken from them, to be brought up in popish principles; and after this a great number ** driven out in the midst of winter, the passages shut up against the rest, and all manner of ways used to hinder the sale of their effects, and render it impracticable.

Since these transactions, we are informed by the public prints, that many hundreds of the poor people employed in the salt-mines have embraced the Protestant religion: and that the great increase of Protestants of different conditions in life, computed at no less than two thirds of the whole number of his subjects, had so exasperated the Archbishop, that he had † made a solemn vow at the altar to exterminate them out of his dominions. Which vow he is using endeavours to put in execution, tho the consequence be the leaving his country naked and empty. Accordingly it appears already, that in || one district there are only 15 Papists left; the rest of the inhabitants being all departed for other countries, and the number of Protestants in other parts of the Archbishopric continually increasing, and expecting to be driven out. It is remarkable, that

* P. 68.

† P. 70.

** P. 91.

† Daily Journal, Sept. 2, 1732.

|| Ibid. Aug. 31, 1732.

* those of the remaining inhabitants who now declare for the Romish religion, are obliged to take, among others, this horrible oath; *that the Evangelic or Protestant doctrine is a damnable doctrine*: and they are threatened, that in case any of them return to that religion, they shall be stripped of all their goods and chattels, and that the two fingers which they made use of in taking the said oath, shall be chopt off. And the chancellour of the Court has signified, that in case the emigrants ever return into Saltzburg, they shall be still worse dealt with.

We cannot but hope, that the furious zeal with which this persecution is carried on, will produce an effect quite contrary to the persecutor's design. It was observed by the Protestant body, in their appeal to the Emperor a year ago, that † the number of those who declared for the Evangelical religion increased in proportion to the violence of their enemies: and that it was then computed, according to very credible advices, that they were not less than 20000. They are since believed to have arisen to 30000 or upwards, including those who still remain in Saltzburg; and to be continually increasing. And tho by this increase their distress for the present must be exceeding great; yet hereby a hopeful prospect is given, that their prince will in time see the necessity of doing what is so fit and reasonable in itself, *i. e.* † granting religious liberties to peaceful subjects.

* Daily Journal, Aug. 31, 1732. † Account, p. 73.

‡ It was reported, some time since, that the Archbishop had already published an edict, encouraging the remainder of his Protestant subjects to stay, and promising to use them kindly. But other accounts inform us, that he still keeps them in his dominions, and is likely to send them out as he did last year, in the winter-season. Agreeably hereto, it is written from Ratisbon, Nov. 6. N. S. that the Protestant Saltzburgers, who work in the mines of Duremberg, have presented a memorial to the Evangelic body; acquainting them that the Archbishop had caused notice to be given them to depart the 19th of this month; and praying the said body to procure them the liberty of passing unmolested thro' the dominions of the Elector of Bavaria and the Bishop of Passau. *Vid. Daily Post-boy of Nov. 18.*

Upwards

Upwards of 20000 are believed to be already come out of Saltzburg, and received, some into one part of Germany, some into another. And the kindness wherewith they have been entertained, by people very far from abounding in riches, and the wisdom shewn by their hospitable brethren in * avoiding bitter reflexions upon their popish neighbours, while they exhort the sufferers to stedfastness, together with that remarkable patience and quietness of spirit, and that cheerful application to hard labour for a support, which are visible in the sufferers themselves; give great hope, that the providence of God, which has opened the eyes of such numbers of people in so small a tract of country, invironed on all sides with papists, and which has favoured them thus far, will make them the means of spreading the light of the Protestant doctrine more and more.

'Tis certain that the zeal of our charitable brethren deserves our imitation: and the exigency of the sufferers case calls for it, notwithstanding the harbour they have received, the assistance already sent from this nation, and the royal liberality of the prince who has entertained most of them. For we are assured by very credible accounts, that they begin to be in great distress, by reason of their † numbers, and the poverty of the country whither the greatest part of them are gone. Nor is it to be wondered at, that people who have any tender sense of the afflictions of their brethren, shou'd, at the first sight of their miseries, give that present relief, which they are not well able to continue. And in the mean time, the notion apt to be entertain'd by people at a distance, that these exiles are all provided for, makes their distress the greater.

* Account pag. 32.

† The Daily Courant of Nov. 7. informs us, that 17500 are arrived in Prussia; that their travelling charges and maintenance had already cost the king 600000 crowns; and that the settling them would cost him as much more.

Give me leave to add; that the trustees here at London, for receiving contributions towards their relief, published in * one of the news-papers last month an account of their progress, in letters from Germany, particularly from Augsburgh; acknowledging the receipt of several sums of money by them transmitted, declaring the uses to which they were applied, and taking notice of the many blessings returned by the persons relieved to their distant benefactors. And as the names of the trustees, with their places of abode, are purposely published at the end of the little treatise from which I have taken the substance of the account now laid before you, that every one may be satisfied in the characters of those by whom his bounty is to be conveyed; so you have abundant reason to believe, that what you charitably contribute, will be applied to the purpose for which you bestow it.

I shall conclude all with putting you in mind of a saying of our blessed Lord; which by the manner wherein it is recorded, seems to have been often in his mouth, and is perfectly agreeable to that most benevolent spirit which breathes thro' his whole doctrine: † *it is more blessed to give than to receive.* It becomes you to think on these words of your Lord and Master, now that a proper occasion is set before you for answering their design. Shew that you are of the same disposition of mind with him whose disciples you profess to be. And be assured that this saying of his will always hold good; not only with regard to that condition of life which enables a man to impart of his substance to others, compared with the necessity of accepting relief; but with regard to the superior pleasure of being helpful, above that of receiving assistance. For tho the receiving a needful supply, by what means soever it comes, is always attended with a delight equal to the concern which possessed

* White-hall Evening Post, of September 16. 1732.

† Acts xx. 35.

the mind before that supply came : yet it is vastly inferior to that noble pleasure which attends the mind of the generous benefactor. It is very much allayed by the consideration of being dependent and under obligations, in many cases, where the person relieved has as strong a disposition to generosity as those who relieve him. The man who relieves his distressed brother, partakes with him in his joy : and has another of a superior nature besides ; the joy of feeling himself the happy means of doing good. And a high delight may justly be taken in this, without the least mixture of pride. So it is in the most high himself : whose bright example we imitate, and whose children we prove our selves to be, by delighting to do good. But there is no real goodness in us, no resemblance of our heavenly Father, if the kindnesses we impart are attended with pride and contempt towards those who receive them. I make no doubt, that many of those whom you are now in a capacity to relieve, themselves have generous spirits ; and would have taken pleasure to help others, in such circumstances wherein they now want your assistance. But the providence of God has not granted them the opportunity. You have the honour to have it set before you : the exalted pleasure is offered to you : and I hope you have a disposition and relish for it,

F I N I S.

Lately published,

A Sermon preached at an Ordination of Deacons, *July 15. 1730.* By *Joseph Burroughs.* Printed for *J. Noon,* at the *White Hart* in *Cheapside.*

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